

Message Text

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S E C R E T PRAGUE 3142

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: SCUL, PFOR, CZ
SUBJECT: DIFFICULTIES IN CONCLUDING EXCHANGE AGREEMENT

1. ON FRINGES OF OCTOBER 22 DINNER PARTY GIVEN
BY CANADIAN AMBASSADOR DUMAS, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
SPACIL TOOK AN EXCEPTIONALLY RIGID LINE IN DISCUSSING
WITH ME THE CURRENT STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS ON US-CSSR
CULTURAL-EDUCATIONAL-SCIENTIFIC-TECHNOLOGICAL EXCHANGE AGREEMENT.

2. REGARDING PIVOTAL QUESTION OF REFERENCE TO "INDIVIDUALS"
IN IMPLEMENTATION PARAGRAPH, SPACIL ASKED IF WE COULD FIND
LANGUAGE MEETING CZECHOSLOVAK NEEDS. I THOUGHT WE MIGHT FIND
COMPROMISE, IF WE GOT SOME HELP FROM CZECH SIDE, BUT AT PRESENT
THE ISSUE SEEMS BLOCKED. SPACIL SAID IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE
TO REACH AGREEMENT, IF US CONTINUES TO PRESS FOR ITS PRESENT
FORMULATION ON THIS SUBJECT. I SUGGESTED THAT BOTH SIDES MIGHT
SIT DOWN TOGETHER AND COME UP WITH AN ACCEPTABLE TEXT.

3. SPACIL ADMONISHED THAT WITHOUT FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THIS
MATTER, IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO "ADJOURN" THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR
AWHILE. HE THEN SUGGESTED THERE MIGHT EVEN BE "NO AGREEMENT".
WHEN I RESPONDED THAT THE ISSUE OF EXCHANGES AMONG INDIVIDUALS
WAS SO IMPORTANT TO WASHINGTON THERE INDEED MIGHT BE NO AGREEMENT,
IF CZECHOSLOVAKS CANNOT ACCEPT A REASONABLE COMPROMISEGU SPACIL
APPEARED VISIBLY DISTURBED. HE SEEMED TO BACK OFF, NOTING
THAT FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK WOULD NO DOUBT BE SEEING ME
SOON AND THOUGHT THE MATTER COULD BE TAKEN UP THEN.

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4. COMMENT: THE CZECHOSLOVAKS ARE CLEARLY NERVOUS AND UNCERTAIN ABOUT HOW TO WRAP UP TALKS ON THE EXCHANGE AGREEMENT, WHICH THEY GIVE EVERY SIGN OF WANTING TO CONCLUDE SOON. THEY HAVE APPARENTLY TAKEN A HIGH LEVEL DECISION NOT TO GO BEYOND THEIR EXISTING DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PARAGRAPH AND TO AWAIT A NEW DRAFT FROM OUR SIDE. I MAY, THEREFORE, PRESENT OUR APPROVED COMPROMISE TEXT SOON, WHEN THE RIGHT TACTICAL SITUATION ARISES. MEANTIME, I SUSPECT THAT BEHIND SPACIL'S HARD LINE MAY BE A MORE SOBER GOC ATTITUDE TOWARD EXCHANGE AGREEMENT QUESTIONS AT THE TIME WHEN EFFORTS TO MOVE TOWARD A RESOLUTION OF THE GOLD/CLAIMS IMBROGLIO APPEAR TO BE GOING NOWHERE. AFTER HIS FRANK DISCUSSION WITH SCOTT IN FLORIDA DURING VISIT TO US FOR UNGA OPENING, CHNOUPEK MAY HAVE INSTRUCTED SPACIL TO STIFFEN CZECHOSLOVAK STANCE AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING ON EXCHANGE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS. IF AND WHEN I SEE CHNOUPEK, IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO GET A BETTER READING ON THE CZECHOSLOVAK ATTITUDE TOWARD WRAPPING UP THE EXCHANGE AGREEMENT--OR SHELIVING IT.

BYRNE

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